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UBD 4

One of the important takeaways I got from this chapter was the importance of understanding vs knowledge. While knowledge is always important and going to be crucial to an understanding and an intelligence in any content area, understanding proves to be a better indicator of a student's engagement and overall comprehension of the content. For example a student might know that the United States entered world war 2 in 1941 but it is far more valuable to understand why they entered the war and to make the connections of what events led up to that moment. If we can teach in a way that allows students to make connections rather than just memorize material then the learning of that material will be far more enduring and can be a foundation to build more connections from. For this reason concepts become more important than details, if students spend time memorizing details of the content such as names, dates, etc. then they run the risk of missing or glossing over the take home points of a lesson. Conversely if a student first has an understanding of the big picture or has a conceptual understanding of the lesson then details serve as evidence a student can attach to that concept as a validation of material they understand. One concept I didn't necessarily agree with was that the "more or less" approach doesn't work or shouldn't be employed in the classroom. I'm not sure of the exact way to reach every student in the class and get them all to the same point by the end of the year. I don't believe the answer is to allow the students who understand the material at mastery level to sit in class and become disengaged because they aren't challenged by the material and to allow the students who don't understand to fall behind because they can't keep up.